

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PBOR, IS, LE, UN
SUBJECT: SOUTHERN LEBANON-NEW WITHDRAWAL TIMETABLE

REF: (A) STATE 093327; (B) JERUSALEM 01053; (C) PARIS 11835
(D) JERUSALEM 10167

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1. I MET WITH WEIZMAN THIS EVENING TO CARRY OUT
INSTRUCTIONS OF REF A. I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DCM
VIETS AND COL. WILLIAMS. WITH WEIZMAN WERE DEPUTY
MINISTER OF DEFENSE ZIPPORI AND COL. TEHILA. COL.
LEVINSON, ISRAELI LIAISON OFFICER TO THE UN, WAS CALLED
IN AT ONE POINT DURING THE DISCUSSION.

2. I STARTED OUT BY TELLING WEIZMAN THAT THE POLITICAL CLOCK IN NEW YORK IS TICKING, THAT UNSC WOULD MEET VERY SOON, AND THAT PRESSURES WERE GROWING RAPIDLY. GAVE HIM SOME FLAVOR OF LAST UNSC CONSULTATIONS AND TALK OF SANCTIONS. STRESSED THAT THE WITHDRAWAL CONCEPT WHICH HE HAD GIVEN SIILASVUO ON APRIL 11 (REF B) DID NOT DEAL WITH THE POLITICAL PROBLEM THAT HE AND I HAD BEEN TALKING ABOUT FOR THE LAST THREE WEEKS. I INSISTED THAT ALTHOUGH THE CONCEPT WAS OF INTEREST MILITARILY, THE ESSENCE OF THE PROBLEM OF RESPONDING TO THE RISING TIDE OF PRESSURE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL COULD ONLY BE DEALT WITH BY SETTING A FIRM WITHDRAWAL TARGET DATE. I EMPHASIZED THAT TO BE OF MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS THE WITHDRAWAL WOULD HAVE TO BE COMPLETED THIS MONTH. I TOLD WEIZMAN THAT I DID NOT THINK THAT HE TOTALLY UNDERSTOOD THE TYPE OF PRESSURES BEING GENERATED IN NEW YORK AND ELSEWHERE. AS ONE EXAMPLE I DREW UPON THE CONCERNS OF THE FRENCH (REF C) ABOUT CONTINUED ISRAELI PRESENCE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON.

3. WEIZMAN RESPONDED TO MY DEMARCHE BY SAYING, "WHY DON'T YOU TALK TO SIILASVUO -- I AM EVACUATING SOUTHERN LEBANON IN COORDINATION WITH SIILASVUO WHO WAS PRESENTED THE PLAN LAST NIGHT." WEIZMAN EMPHASIZED HE BELIEVES THAT THE WITHDRAWAL IS BEING COORDINATED AND IN HIS SECRET

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OPINION IS IN ACCORD WITH SC RESOLUTION 425. HE INSISTED SEVERAL TIMES THAT THE PROPER HANDING OVER, RATHER THAN THE HASTY HANDING OVER, TO UNIFIL IS WHAT IS IMPORTANT. "I CAN GET OUT IN 24 HOURS -- AND SIILASVUO WOULD FLIP." BECAUSE OF THIS SITUATION WEIZMAN SAID HE COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT GIVE ME A DATE OR A COMMITMENT AT THIS TIME BECAUSE SIILASVUO HAD NOT ASKED THE GOI TO SET ANY DATE. HE SAID - AND HE CALLED IN COL. LEVINSON TO CONFIRM THIS - THAT SIILASVUO HAD ONLY ASKED FOR A CONCEPT OF WITHDRAWAL PHASING AND NOT REPEAT NOT FOR A TIMETABLE.

4. I TOLD WEIZMAN THAT WE AGREED TOTALLY THAT SIILASVUO NEEDS MORE FORCES AND WE ARE TRYING TO ASSIST HIM IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN THEM BY EXPLAINING THESE NEEDS TO HIS SUPERIORS IN NEW YORK, BUT THAT IT WAS OUR FIRM BELIEF THAT A PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO WITHDRAWAL BY A CERTAIN EARLY DATE WILL HELP A GREAT DEAL IN THIS REGARD. AT THIS POINT WEIZMAN BROKE IN TO SUGGEST THAT WE TALK TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND HAVE THE SECRETARY GENERAL TELL SIILASVUO TO GO TO THE ISRAELI MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND "ASK ME TO SET A DATE". AGAIN

HE SAID THAT SIILASVUO HAD INDICATED THAT HE DIDN'T WANT DATES BUT A CONCEPT -- "I GAVE HIM A CONCEPT. IF HE COMES TO ME AND ASKS FOR A TIME I'LL GIVE HIM A TIME." HE THEN IMMEDIATELY QUALIFIED THIS BY REMINDING ME THAT THE CHRISTIAN ENCLAVES WILL BE A PROBLEM JUST AS TYRE IS A PROBLEM.

5. I MADE ANOTHER TRY AT IMPRESSING WEIZMAN WITH THE IMMEDIATE POLITICAL PROBLEM AS OPPOSED TO THE MILITARY METHODOLOGY. I ALSO REMINDED HIM THAT 425 RELATES ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF UNIFIL, BUT THE TWO ARE NOT LINKED. WEIZMAN COUNTERED AGAIN BY SAYING THAT SIILASVUO DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH TROOPS AND "I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON IN FOUR
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TO FIVE MONTHS BECAUSE THE PALESTINIANS HAVE RETURNED."

6. AT ONE POINT I ASKED WEIZMAN IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY PROGRESS CONCERNING THE ARRANGEMENT OF A MEETING BETWEEN GUR AND SENIOR LEBANESE REPRESENTATIVES. WEIZMAN DIDN'T KNOW THE UP-TO-DATE STATUS, BUT SAID THAT SIILASVUO HAD THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA FOR GUR OR HIMSELF TO MEET WITH "REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOVERIEGN STATE OF LEBANON." HE SAID THAT HE IS READY TO MEET UNDER THE AUSPICES OF ILMAC OR UNDER ANY OTHER CONDITIONS.

7. COMMENT: WEIZMAN AND COMPANY AT ALL TIMES INSISTED THAT SIILASVUO NEVER ASKED FOR A TIMETABLE. OUR REVIEW OF PARA 5 REF B TENDS TO LEAVE US BELIEVING THAT SIILASVUO MAY HAVE MENTIONED TIMING BUT CONCENTRATED ON THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF WITHDRAWAL. BECAUSE OF THE APPARENT CONFUSION, I PLAN TO TRY TO MEET WITH SIILASVUO TOMORROW AFTERNOON WITH NEWLIN IN AN ATTEMPT TO URGE HIM TO INDEED CONCENTRATE ON A TIMETABLE RATHER THAN THE CONCEPT. HOWEVER, I SUSPECT THAT WEIZMAN MAY RESPOND TO ANY REQUESTS BY SIILASVUO BY SAYING "YOU GIVE ME YOUR TIMETABLE AND I'LL GIVE YOU MINE." FOR THIS REASON IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE CONTINUE TO PUSH HARDER FOR MORE FORCES IN UNIFIL, TO INCLUDE FULL LOGISITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE BACKUP SUPPORT.

8. DID NOT SPECIFICALLY OFFER SUGGESTIONS FOR PUBLIC STATEMENT (PARA 4 REF A) SINCE WEIZMAN MADE CLEAR HE WOULD SET A WITHDRAWAL DATE ONLY IF SIILASVUO ASKED HIM TO DO SO. MADE CLEAR THAT I WOULD HAVE SUGGESTION TO OFFER WHEN HE WAS READY.

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9. FOR USUN. PENDING MY MEETING TOMORROW WITH SIILASVUO,
STRONGLYURGE YOU NOT SHARE COMMENTS ABOUT HIS VIEWS WITH
UNNY.
LEWIS

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NNN

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